



## News From Congresswoman Hilda L. Solis 32<sup>nd</sup> Congressional District of California

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **EPA FLAWED RULE HURTS PUBLIC HEALTH, REWARDS INDUSTRY**

**WASHINGTON, D.C.** –*Today, Congresswoman Hilda L. Solis (CA-32), Ranking Member of the Subcommittee on Environment and Hazardous Materials, issued the following statement in response to the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) plan to reduce mercury emissions from power plants:*

“Mirroring President Bush’s Clear Skies legislation, today’s proposal undermines long supported Clean Air Act principles that require polluters to use maximum achievable control technology to address toxic air pollutants.

“In releasing this rule, EPA rejected comments from more than 500,000 citizens, the General Accounting Office and the EPA’s own Inspector General who expressed concern about the failure of the rule to adequately address mercury pollution.

“This flawed rule hurts public health and rewards industry. I am outraged that the same agency put in charge of protecting public health continues to develop regulations that hurt those with the least ability to defend themselves – infants, children, and underserved communities. The only ones who will benefit from this rule are the polluters.

“Time and time again, the Bush Administration has ignored the health impacts of its regulations. Years from now our children and our children’s children will be stuck cleaning up our mess; by then the cost will be so much higher to address children’s developmental problems and water contamination.”

#### **Background:**

Mercury is a known hazardous air pollutant. It has been linked to mental retardation, cerebral palsy, deafness and blindness in developing fetuses and infants. Each year 630,000 children are born with mercury levels above what the EPA considers safe. The quality of life and health of the Latino community is disproportionately affected by air pollution, especially mercury. More than 70% of Latinos live in communities that violate air quality standards and the incidence of asthma in Latino children is two and one-half times that of non-Latino white children. Forty four states have issued warning labels regarding mercury contamination, which has already contaminated more than 25% of national bodies of water and can significantly harm fetal development.

Last May, Solis was one of eight Members who led the effort expressing concern about the development of this rule. These concerns were supported in a letter by more than 170 other Members of Congress. Yesterday, Solis joined 14 members in sending a letter to EPA reiterating these concerns.

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